

A decorative border with intricate floral and scrollwork patterns in a dark brown color, framing the central text.

# **It Hurts, Doesn't It?**

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## **It Hurts, Doesn't It? by nb\_richie (shipit)**

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**Summary:**

Richie misses Stan.

## **It Hurts, Doesn't It?**

“It hurts, doesn’t it?”

Hurts is an understatement. It doesn’t even begin to describe the pain Richie feels whenever he thinks about Stan. No word, or even a string of words, possibly can. Bill could try, maybe Ben, with their talent for writing, but nothing can come close. Some combination of pain, anger, hopelessness, depression, bitterness, and emptiness is all that Richie feels whenever he thinks about Stan.

They were best friends, when they were kids. More, when they were older. At night, all the memories come rushing back to him, rolling over him like waves. Often, the bad ones have him stumbling to the toilet to throw up until his stomach is empty and he shakes with the force of his crying. Good ones are somehow worse, because they leave him sobbing and wishing he could fix all his mistakes that brought it to an end.

All of them were just kids when It happened the first time. Eleven. Twelve. Stan was the youngest. He didn’t deserve to be so frightened. None of them did, but Stan in particular. He was quiet, smart, nice to most people. Without It, he would have lived a good life. A long one.

That summer is so haunting, so intense in Richie’s memory he can’t comprehend how he ever forgot the horrors. Most frightening are the images of Stan, bloody and screaming and clinging to Richie’s shirt for dear life. When he stopped screaming, he started praying rapidly. Stan was terrified.

But one thing Richie has never forgotten are the two years he and Stan were more than just friends.

He always remembers the flower- a dandelion plucked straight from the schoolyard- that he presented to Stan when he asked him on their first date in sophomore year. That was a magical night, with sarcasm and laughter. At the very end, they had kissed and Stan scrunched his nose up because Richie tasted like cigarettes.

Then there’s the day they told their friends after three months of

dating. Stan's slender hand was clinging tightly to Richie's the whole time. Richie had assured him many times that the losers would accept them, but it couldn't fully dispel Stan's fear. Of course everyone was happy for them, but it was nearly fifteen minutes before Stan's racing heart had settled and he relaxed his grip on Richie's hand.

It was in Richie's bedroom that they had sex for the first time. Their one year anniversary was spent indoors with lazy kisses until Stan asked to try it. They were both unsure of themselves and inexperienced in something so hated in Derry. But they figured it out eventually and Richie remembers looking at Stan's face afterward and thinking that he wanted to spend the rest of his life with Stan.

Only a few days later, Richie went with Stan to tell his parents. They held hands the entire way and Richie kept promising it would be okay. No matter what he said though, Stan clung to him the entire time out of fear. His parents had been angry, disgusted- Stan's father raised a hand to hit him. Richie jumped in between them without thinking and took the blow before dragging Stan from the house. He promised to protect him and give him a roof over his head until Stan's parents came around- if they ever would.

Things started going downhill after four months of Stan living with Richie. Richie smoked more, Stan went bird watching more often, they kissed less. More often than not, they fought. Stan started to spend his night with the other losers when he could. All the things they had loved about each other turned to annoyances and more reason to argue.

Maybe they could have salvaged their relationship if Richie hadn't gotten drunk. He never remembered what actually happened on that night, just that when he woke up, he was half naked in some random girl's bed. Richie knows he didn't cheat. No matter how drunk he got, no matter who he was with, Richie had never even thought about being unfaithful. He didn't cheat on Stan.

But without memories and in such a compromising situation, he couldn't explain what happened, and Stan wouldn't hear it either way. Their fight lasted for hours. Stan had screamed himself hoarse, and Richie had spoken very quietly and slowly. It was all over when

Richie threw a punch.

Not at Stan- Christ, he would never dream of it.

Richie punched the wall, making a hole in the plaster and scraping his knuckles to all hell. He's done that before, but never during a fight with Stan. Nothing, not even It, had ever put that level of terror in Stan's face. He grabbed his jacket and fled without a word, leaving Richie to stand dumbly in his room and come to terms with what just happened.

Next thing Richie knew, Stan was back at home and living a happy life without him. His parents blamed Richie for it all. Stan was welcomed back with open arms under the promise to never let a devil like Richard Tozier whisk him away again. He was safer there than he had been with Richie.

Half a year later, Richie left for college and never spoke to Stan again. Still, he always kept those memories- those regrets- in the back of his mind as a reminder that he fucked up.

“Yeah. Why, sure. It hurts.”

**Author's Note:**

Catch me on tumblr @nb-richie